

**In the claims:**

The claims standing for examination are reproduced below.

1-18. (Canceled)

19. (New) A multi-layered covering for use on the back of an animal, comprising:  
a conformal layer comprising fibers comprising phase change material (PCM), the layer disposed to be in contact with the animal's flesh; and  
a shock-absorbing layer comprising material having shock-absorbing qualities;  
wherein the multi-layered covering is permeable to air and moisture.

20. (New) The multi-layered covering of claim 19 wherein the PCM material is chosen to be a material for which the phase-change temperature is about ninety-five degrees Fahrenheit.

21. (New) The multi-layered covering of claim 19 wherein the material of the shock-absorbing layer is one of a visco-elastic or open-celled material, in at least 7-pound weight.

22. (New) The multi-layered covering of claim 1 further comprising a pocket between two layers for enclosing the shock-absorbing material.

23. (New) A multi-layered covering for use on the back of an animal, comprising:  
a conformal layer comprising fibers based on rare earth elements, optically responsive to both wavelengths of ambient light and energy produced by an animal's body, to interact with the animal in a manner to increase oxygenated blood flow through cell structure of the flesh, the layer disposed to be in contact with the animal's flesh; and

a shock-absorbing layer comprising material having shock-absorbing qualities;  
wherein the multi-layered covering is permeable to air and moisture.

24. (New) The multi-layered covering of claim 23 wherein the material of the shock-absorbing layer is one of a visco-elastic or open-celled material, in at least 7-pound weight.

25. (New) The multi-layered covering of claim 23 further comprising a pocket between two layers for enclosing the shock-absorbing material.

26. (New) A multi-layered covering for use on the back of an animal, comprising:  
a conformal layer comprising fibers comprising phase change material (PCM) and fibers based on rare earth elements, optically responsive to both wavelengths of ambient light and energy produced by an animal's body, to interact with the animal in a manner to increase oxygenated blood flow through cell structure of the flesh, the layer disposed to be in contact with the animal's flesh; and  
a shock-absorbing layer comprising material having shock-absorbing qualities;  
wherein the multi-layered covering is permeable to air and moisture.

27. (New) The multi-layered covering of claim 26 wherein the PCM material is chosen to be a material for which the phase-change temperature is about ninety-five degrees Fahrenheit.

28. (New) The multi-layered covering of claim 26 wherein the material of the shock-absorbing layer is one of a visco-elastic or open-celled material, in at least 7-pound weight.

29. (New) The multi-layered covering of claim 26 further comprising a pocket between two layers for enclosing the shock-absorbing material.